

REMARKS

The present Amendment amends claims 1, 3 and 8-11 and leaves 2 and 4-6 unchanged. Therefore, the present application has pending claims 1-6 and 8-11.

The present Amendment is being filed as part of a Request for Continued Examination (RCE) in response to the March 3, 2004 Advisory Action. The present Amendment amends the independent claims so as to more clearly recite features of the present invention argued in the January 28, 2004 Response as not being taught or suggested by any of the references. In the Advisory Action, the Examiner alleges that such features were not recited in the claims. The present Amendment now places such features in the claims and as such require examination by the Examiner.

Prior to examination of the present application based on this Amendment, Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to contact Applicants' Attorney by telephone so as to schedule an interview to discuss the outstanding issues of the present application. Such an interview is necessary and would be quite helpful in progressing this case to issue since the claims have been amended to recite features not taught or suggested by any of the references of record particularly Campbell (U.S. Patent No. 5,918,209), Lynch (U.S. Patent No. 6,119,094) and the alleged Official Notice whether taken individually or in combination with each other. Thus, all of the previous rejections of the claims as set forth by the Examiner in the August 28, 2003 Office Action should be reconsidered and withdrawn.

It should be noted that in the June 9, 2003 Amendment and the January 28, 2004 Response, Applicants traversed the Official Notice and requested that the Examiner comply with the procedures as set forth in MPEP 2144.04(c) which

requires the Examiner to produce a reference when Applicants traverse an Official Notice. As of yet, the Examiner has not complied with the procedures of MPEP 2144.04(c). The Examiner is again requested to comply with this requirement or withdraw the Official Notice.

Further, it should be noted that the contents of the Remarks of the June 9, 2003 Amendment and the arguments set forth in the January 28, 2004 Response are incorporated herein by reference. The arguments presented by Applicants in these prior filed documents are still applicable, even more so since the features alleged by the Examiner as having been argued but not appearing in the claims are now specifically recited in the claims.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants submit that claims 1-6 and 8-11 are in condition for allowance. Accordingly, early allowance of claims 1-6 and 8-11 is respectfully requested.

To the extent necessary, the applicants petition for an extension of time under 37 CFR 1.136. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, or credit any overpayment of fees, to the deposit account of Antonelli, Terry, Stout & Kraus, LLP, Deposit Account No. 01-2135 (566.38876X00).

Respectfully submitted,

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